

OPENING STATEMENT

PRESS CONFERENCE

SEPTEMBER 8, 1986

*Mission
Students
family
program
Impressions*

Yesterday we opened a unique facility in the history of Illinois education.

The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy which was created by the legislature as part of the educational reform package is destined to become a state-wide and ultimately a national resource for educational dialogue, inquiry and exploration.

There is a widely recognized perception that the nation is facing a crisis in fulfilling its need for citizens trained in the fields of science, mathematics and technology. In particular, the State of Illinois has an obligation toward this national issue and to its own need to develop the human resources that are so intimately coupled to economic leadership in a post-industrial society. The Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy is prepared to address this very broad challenge through the nurturing of creative excellence in students of science and mathematics.

Our principle mission is to train and provide an exemplary program for our students within an environment that fosters creativity, imagination and risk taking. The Academy will also be a catalyst for the improvement and enhancement of the teaching and learning of science and mathematics in all Illinois schools by serving as a laboratory for curriculum and instructional inquiry, development and experimentation. Our second mission is to share.

Because of the nature of our institution it will permit us to acquire resources that other schools will not have. Our purpose is to use these resources, both human and material to learn as much as we can and to share what is learned with others across the state. As a pioneering academic community, the Academy will serve as a research center for curriculum and instructional research and development and integrated learning and technology.

Yesterday, we enrolled 209 students (119 male and 90 female) from across the state. Students were admitted on the basis of competitive examination, the evaluations of 30 impartial outside evaluators, a committee of consultants, and Illinois Mathematics and Science staff. A multiple criteria admission process was used.

The mean verbal SAT score is 537 and the mean math SAT score is 620. Their average GPA was 3.9 out of 4.

We expect that when the charter class graduates in 1989 they will be ready to enter the University at at least the sophomore level.

Our students are housed in temporary dormitories within this facility and the resident counseling staff is living with them.

Our new dormitories are scheduled for completion in January 1987.

Last evening we had a formal convocation ceremony with all the faculty in Academy robes.

Students were challenged by Dr. Lederman as our keynote speaker and then I extended them an invitation to become pioneer learners.

I believe the closing statement in our philosophy which was unanimously adopted by the Board on April 14, 1986 capsulizes our mission:

If we do what we know and feel is right, it is bound to happen that among our graduates there will be numbered scientists, engineers, and those who go on to earn degrees in law and letters. There are likely to be those few, who create new intellectual worlds, cure a dreaded human ailment or in some other way significantly influence life on our planet. Our philosophy will be to treat our charges as if each one is capable of this extraordinary achievement. Only one such product will make the effort and expense of the school for its entire duration worthwhile.

* Delta Rho - Ypsilon -

Phi - Theta -

Sigma - Tau -